



CCM 2015 Testimony

900 CHAPEL STREET, 9th FLOOR, NEW HAVEN, CT 06510-2807 PHONE (203) 498-3000 FAX (203) 562-6314

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GENERAL LAW COMMITTEE

February 24, 2015

My name is Rudy Marconi, First Selectman for the Town of Ridgefield and CCM Board Member.

I am testifying on behalf of the Connecticut Conference of Municipalities (CCM), Connecticut's statewide association of towns and cities. Our members represent 156 towns and cities, representing over 95 percent of Connecticut's population. We appreciate the opportunity to testify and the Committee raising:

SB 933 "An Act Concerning the Prescription Monitoring Program"

CCM supports this bill as would make licensing and license renewal for practitioners who distribute, administer or dispense controlled substances contingent on registration with the Prescription Monitoring Program (PMP).

The PMP can be a vital tool to help combat the growing trend of controlled substance abuse, however it is apparently underutilized. As of October of 2013, approximately 20% of all prescribers (that are required to register with the PMP) in Connecticut had registered with the PMP. In particular, likely due to the lack of knowledge about the PMP and the benefits it has for both patients and prescribers. The issue has been discussed in a variety of forums, including a Department of Public Health Summit regarding prescription drug abuse, which CCM was also fortunate to participate. The proposal before you today was something that was discussed.

During the summer and fall of 2014, CCM convened a working group comprised of municipal CEOs, health professionals, community health providers, educators and law enforcement officials to examine the drug abuse epidemic affecting our communities. I was fortunate enough to chair this working group where we met with various state agencies including Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services, Department of Consumer Protection, Department of Public Health, and Department of Children and Families to discuss how the state and local efforts could enhance drug abuse prevention in the state.

The CCM work group developed a series of recommendations, from administrative to legislative. The proposals are comprehensive, involving the various issues relating to drug abuse, such as education for prescribers, better utilization of the PMP, availability of Narcan, enhanced and modified prevention initiatives in schools, and improvements to assist law enforcement combat illegal drug activity.

Based on the discussions from the experts, the working group recommended that enhancements should be made to the PMP, in particular encouraging greater registration and utilization with the program. Along with supporting the underlining intent of SB 933 to enhance prescriber's registration with the PMP, CCM would recommend the

bill be amended to offer incentives to require health care prescribers to also consult the PMP prior to prescribing a controlled substance.

As you know, there are a variety of bills this year focused on the issue of substance abuse prevention, including HB 6856 which is the Governor's bill to address substance abuse and opioid overdose prevention. CCM will continue to advocate for these important proposals which will ultimately provide an enhanced public welfare for Connecticut.

CCM and the Town of Ridgefield urge the Committee to *favorably report SB 933*.

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If you have any questions, please contact Mike Muszynski, Senior Legislative Associate of CCM at mmuszynski@ccm-ct.org or (203) 500-7556.